

The Artist Teaching of Alexander Goldenweiser: Fingers in Service to Music

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in Music and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.

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Date Defended: 10 May 2018

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Abstract

This paper examines the life, teaching methods, and critical editions of Alexander Goldenweiser (1875-1961), a major figure of the Russian music scene in the first half of the twentieth century. A pianist, teacher, and composer, Goldenweiser left an important legacy with his teaching philosophy and editions of piano scores. Many of his students have become renowned pianists and teachers themselves, who have transmitted Goldenweiser's teaching philosophy to their own pupils, thus strengthening the widely recognized Russian school of piano. An examination of his teaching methods reveals his teaching philosophy, which focuses on the development of a piano technique that seeks a faithful interpretation of the music scores. In his view, children should start taking piano lessons at an early age to acquire the necessary skills to master all sorts of passages in the piano literature, and to these purposes, he was influential in the creation of the Central Music School in Moscow, where musically-gifted children study the elementary and secondary school levels. As a music editor, he innovated aspects of fingering and pedaling, and emphasized the significance of a faithful score reading that respects the composers' markings and intentions with their music. More specifically, this paper analyzes Goldenweiser's edition of three piano sonatas by Beethoven—Op. 10 no. 2 (B-flat Major), Op. 22, and Op. 28 (D Major),—comparing his fingerings to those of the Henle's and Schnabel's editions in order to understand Goldenweiser's editing choices. Although Goldenweiser did not publish a book or method of piano playing that codified his ideas on the art of piano, as several contemporary pianists did, he created detailed annotated editions which may give young pianists an even clearer image of his pedagogical methods and musical philosophy.

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Introduction

More than one hundred and fifty years have passed since the establishment of the Russian piano school, inspired by Anton Rubinstein, and many of the greatest names in Russian pianism have left an indelible mark around the world: Vladimir Horowitz (1903-1989), Sviatoslav Richter (1915-1997), Yakov Flier (1912-1977), Kanstantin Igumunov (1873-1948), Alexander Goldenweiser (1875-1961), Emil Giles (1916-1985), Lev Oborin (1907-1974), among others. At the turn of the twentieth century, both instrumental performance and pedagogical practice underwent intensive development in Russia with the appearance of outstanding musicians and piano teachers, such as Alexander Goldenweiser, Vasily Safonov (1852-1918) and Alexander Siloti (1863-1945).¹ They were highly educated individuals who laid the foundations of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian pianism.

The Moscow Conservatory, founded in 1866, is one of the best-known conservatories in the world. In memory of the famous Russian composer Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, who taught there in the early years of the institution, the music academy was renamed as the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory, on the centenary of his birth in 1940. Numerous musicians have been (and continue to be) trained at this institution, and many of them have become world-renowned musicians. Russian students and those from other countries all strive to be admitted to the legendary institution. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to consider this conservatory as the cradle of master musicians in Russia. The piano department of the Moscow Conservatory, in particular, has been receiving worldwide attention since its establishment. The first president of the conservatory, Nikolai Rubinstein (1835-1881), was a gifted pianist and composer who convinced outstanding pianists of his time to teach there. Through their careful guidance, several

¹ Siloti was the first cousin of Sergei Rachmaninoff and student of Franz Liszt.

generations of pianists have developed remarkable performance skills and have carried the Russian piano school to many parts of the world. Two examples of outstanding Russian pianists who taught at prestigious music schools in the United States include Joseph Hofmann (Curtis Institute) and Josef Lhévinne (Juilliard School).² The piano graduates of the Moscow Conservatory created a piano school with Russian characteristics that has had a great influence on piano playing and piano teaching all over the world. In the tradition and development of the Moscow Conservatory's piano school, Alexander Goldenweiser played a pivotal role. He accumulated rich experience through long-term teaching and performing. Drawing on the strengths of others, Goldenweiser ultimately created a piano school in the Russian lineage with his own playing personality and character.

² Lhévinne (1874–1944), Russian pianist and piano teacher and student of Vasily Safonov at the Moscow Conservatory taught at the Juilliard School from 1919. Joseph Hoffmann (1876–1957) was Polish-American pianist, composer, and music teacher who studied under Anton Rubinstein, and taught at the Curtis Institute.

Chapter One

Alexander Goldenweiser

Alexander Borisovich Goldenweiser was born in Kishinev on the 26 February 1875. His father was a lawyer, and his mother was a pianist and singer who gave him his first music lessons during childhood. Alexander's mother often played pieces by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. His older sister, Tatiana, taught him to read music, and he started to learn the piano by himself. Since his father was often away from home in the evenings, his mother used to play the piano while the children were in bed. Goldenweiser grew accustomed to falling asleep while listening to his mother's piano playing.

The Goldenweiser family moved to Moscow in 1883, and Alexander began taking formal music lessons with Vasily Prokunin (1848-1910), who was the student of Tchaikovsky. In 1889, Goldenweiser entered the Moscow Conservatory, where he studied piano with both Alexander Siloti and Pavel Pabst (1854-1910), graduating in 1895. Concurrently to his piano classes, he studied composition with Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935) and Anton Arensky (1861-1906), and counterpoint with Sergei Taneyev (1856-1935), graduating in 1897. Goldenweiser was a close friend of Alexander Scriabin and his interpretations of Scriabin's music were highly esteemed. In 1901, Goldenweiser formed a circle of "Scriabinists" with pianist Mariya Nemenova-Lunts (1879-1954), conductor Konstantin Saradzhev (1877-1954), writer Vladimir Derzhanovsky (1881-1942), and several others. He also had an active role in the activities organized by the society *Friends of the Scriabin Museum*, which was founded in Moscow seven years after the composer's death in 1915.³

³ Alexander Goldenweiser, *Piano Music Volume 1*, performed by Jonathan Powell, Toccata Classics, TOCC 0044, 2008, compact disc. Liner notes.

After being hired in 1906 by his alma mater, the Moscow Conservatory, Goldenweiser became one of the founders of the Russian Piano School, training countless renowned pianists both at home and abroad during his fifty-five years of teaching. His famous pupils include Samuel Feinberg, Lazar Berman, Dmitri Bashkurov, Nodar Gabunia, Tatiana Nikolayeva, and Grigory Ginzburg, and so many others who created a stream of pedagogical thought that exists still all over the world. Additionally, he made great contributions to early childhood musical education by founding the Central Music School for talented kids and by composing works targeted toward this population, such as *“In a Child’s Life,”* Op.32 and *70 pieces, Op. 15.*

One of the Russian’s foremost literary legends, writer Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), appreciated the performances of Goldenweiser as a young musician. In fact, Goldenweiser became a frequent guest of the Tolstoy’s family and the two men established a profound friendship that had a tremendous impact on the pianist’s personality, development of his intellect, and formation of his moral standards. The pianist once wrote in his concert program,

“This is one of the most wonderful evenings in my life. Besides the incomparable interpretation of the Beethoven String Quartet, I have met the most outstanding novelist, **the best person, Lev Tolstoy** (bolded by Goldenweiser himself).”⁴

Tolstoy wrote in his last letter: “Dear Alexander Borisovich, it is music that connects you and me. I cherish the relationship with you.”⁵ Goldenweiser also wrote in his diary: “Without close contact with Tolstoy, there will be no today’s me.”⁶

Tolstoy had a profound impact on Goldenweiser’s piano instruction and he often mentioned Tolstoy in his class at the Moscow Conservatory. His student Lazar Berman recalled

⁴ Lipkina Goldenweiser, “Goldenweiser and Lev Tolstoy: Friends between Generations,” translated by Meiling Jin, *Russian Learning* 4 (2015).

⁵ Goldenweiser, “Goldenweiser and Lev Tolstoy.”

⁶ Goldenweiser, “Goldenweiser and Lev Tolstoy.”

in his article “My teacher-Alexander Goldenweiser,” that Goldenweiser did not like pianists to use too much gesture and body language while playing, so Goldenweiser often told his students about how Tolstoy learned to ride horses. Tolstoy was an excellent rider in his elder years, but according to Goldenweiser, Tolstoy rode very badly during his youth. Only when the writer learned to fully coordinate his body’s motion with those of the horse, was he able to fully control the animal. Goldenweiser said that performers must also be like a good rider and learn to integrate their own bodily motions with the instrument and music they play.⁷

⁷ Berman, L, “My teacher-Alexander Goldenweiser”, *Alexander Goldenweiser in the eyes of his contemporaries, Memoires*, Moscow, S. Petersburg, Center of Humanistic Initiatives for University Books, 2014.

Chapter Two

Goldenweiser's Art of Piano Teaching

Konstantin Igumnov (1873-1948), Alexander Goldenweiser, and Heinrich Neuhaus (1888-1964) are considered the three giants of the Russian piano school in the first half of the twentieth century and most of the well-known Russian pianists studied with these three important figures at the Moscow Conservatory. Igumnov and Neuhaus exquisitely emphasized beautiful tone and expression in music. Igumnov, who had a wealth of stage experience, was particularly disgusted with playing that was merely technical or showy. He believed that the perfect performances conveyed the essence and poetic core of the music. Bella Davidovich, one of Igumnov's famous students, recalled that in teaching Chopin's work, Igumnov paid special attention to the level and quality of sound as well as how to integrate multiple internal harmonies into musical lines. Most of his students were able to show spontaneous emotions and deep poetry in their playing.⁸

Although Goldenweiser was the most serious and intellectual pianist of the three, his most valuable pedagogical skill was to teach his own highly detailed and comprehensively objective attitude towards music to his pupils. He sharply rejected the consumer approach to performing, especially its commercialization or playing for effects. The power of his personality, displayed through his teaching, commonly affected his best students: Samuil Feinberg, Nodar Gabunia, and Dmitry Bashkirov, as well as the future famous organist and editor Leonid Royzman (1916-1989), and even Goldenweiser's musical grandson Victor Merzhanov (1919-

⁸ Zhang, Jing. "The Origin and Inheritance of Russian Piano School." *Journal of Jilin University of Arts*, 6 (2010): 11–14. DOI: 10.13867/j.cnku.1674-544.2010.06.006.

2012) who was a student of Samuel Feinberg, reinforcing that his ideas continued through generations of teaching.⁹

Pianist Andrei Gavrilov once said: “The Goldenweiser’s piano school is characterized by a rational attitude toward music.”¹⁰ Lazar Berman, who spent almost twenty years studying with Goldenweiser, explained further: “From Goldenweiser, I learned the importance of using the “Urtext Edition”, he is a great believer in the concept of “loyalty to the original.”¹¹ Everyone moves on the keyboard, but Goldenweiser took an in-depth analysis of the movements on the keyboard. Berman learned never to just follow the pattern of *crescendo* or *decrescendo* on the scores. Goldenweiser taught Berman to find out the rationale behind the composer’s markings as a practical method and a way of thinking.¹²

According to Bashkistrov, another of his outstanding pupils, “Goldenweiser, like Neuhaus, was a “great literary man and a musically well-educated man. Indeed, as a music thinker, we should strive to possess a variety of relevant knowledge and a wealth of experience in order to achieve a profound realm in both performing and teaching.”¹³ The pianist Tatiana Nikolayeva’s performances were likewise based on wise and calm thinking, and she is known, in addition to her recordings of the complete Bach works for keyboard and the Beethoven Piano Sonatas, as the chief interpreter of Shostakovich’s piano monument, the 24 Preludes and Fugues.

Unlike some other professors at the Moscow conservatory, Goldenweiser was always working on the basic techniques and teaching fundamentals of new pieces to younger pianists. At

⁹ Kofman, “The History of the Russian Piano School, 36.

¹⁰ Andrei Gavrilov (1955-), Swiss pianist with Russian background, studied with Tatiana Kestner (student of Goldenweiser) at the Moscow Central Music School, and completed his studies with Lev Naumov (student of Neuhaus) at the Moscow Conservatory.

¹¹ Jing Zhang, “The Origin and Inheritance of Russian Piano Performance School,” *Journal of Jilin University of Arts* 99 (2010): 13, DOI:10.13867/j.cnku.1674-544.2010.06.006.

¹² Zhang, “The Origin and Inheritance of Russian Piano Performance School,” 13.

¹³ Zhang, “The Origin and Inheritance of Russian Piano Performance School,” 13.

the Conservatory, many teachers wanted to work solely with already seasoned performers or great child prodigies. Unlike his colleagues, Goldenweiser spent a large amount of time preparing elementary or intermediate level students.¹⁴ That is perhaps the main reason that why Goldenweiser composed a large number of didactic piano pieces for children. Goldenweiser believed that most talented performers had to be cultivated from an early age. Therefore, under his guidance and inspiration, the Moscow Conservatory established a successful primary and secondary school called the Central Music School. Russia's greatest teachers worked at the Central Music School, preparing generations of students to enter the conservatory.

Training Method

Goldenweiser placed great importance on fundamental training and wrote many works to specifically focus on the most rudimentary aspects of playing. He believed that instruction in scales and arpeggios should begin as early as possible in childhood, since those without such training faced difficulty when these techniques are required in the repertoire. Only performers who mastered technical hurdles of all kinds from a rather early age do not require special exercises, as they already possess the needed proficiency.

Goldenweiser often used Clementi's and Czerny's etudes in his class. He required students to play a wide range of etudes addressing various difficulties in piano playing. Alexander Braginsky, one of Goldenweiser's last students, said that in his own teaching process, he continued Goldenweiser's teaching tradition as all of his students must play the complete Czerny Etudes Op. 299 before moving to Op. 740. Additionally, Braginsky requires his students to play etudes by many different composers. He implemented an etude and technique exam (akin

¹⁴ Kofman, "The History of the Russian Piano School," 32.

to what is required at the Central Music School) in which his students must participate annually. The etudes that students may choose include those of Czerny, Clementi, Mozskowski, and Cramer.¹⁵

Goldenweiser believed that training the hands in various rhythms and patterns developed maximum finger flexibility, in addition to training in scales and arpeggios. He required students to play Czerny Etudes in different keys, while still using the same fingerings. This was designed to allow students to experience the mutual exchanges of black and white keys in the same etude and also experience different technical difficulties. It maximized the students' flexibility of the hands and fingers, expanded hand and brain coordination, and increased active hearing capabilities. Dmitry Paperno, who was also another outstanding pupil of Goldenweiser, once wrote in his book *Notes of a Moscow Pianist*:

Nearly the end of third grade, in the spring of 1941, I had completed with Alexander Boriscovich two Haydn sonatas, two or three cycles of not-too-complicated Beethoven variations, a lot of Bach (including many three-part inventions and the F minor Concerto), numerous etudes (mostly Czerny), some short pieces by Grieg, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, and so on. A.B. assigned us, the younger pupils, to play most etudes in keys a half-tone lower and higher also, with the same fingerings-which was not easy but greatly developed our auditory and motor skills.¹⁶

In addition to a thorough grounding in all types of etudes, Goldenweiser also emphasized the importance of hand position and had a strict idea about how to introduce, even the youngest children, to basic technical problems:

We don't take into consideration the personal characteristics of each hand. The human hand is built in such a way that the first finger is supposed to embrace a subject... Whatever we do, the first finger is set apart from the other fingers. However, when we teach a child we need to ask him to keep all fingers together, without any tension. When we start teaching scales, it is not a good idea to start with the standard fingering. It is better to use fingers one and two, or one and three with the notes. In addition, to play on the black keys is easier; so do not start studying C major first. The problem is that pieces

¹⁵ Alexander Braginsky in discussion with the author, 17 April 2018.

¹⁶ Dmitri Paperno, *Notes of a Moscow pianist* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1998), 32.

for beginners are written mainly in C or G major. The child has to get used to the black keys from the very beginning.¹⁷

Michail Markov was the student of Victor Merzhanov (the musical grandson of Goldenweiser) and he believed that the Goldenweiser's Piano School was firmly based on Czerny Etudes because developing students' piano technique was a great concern for Goldenweiser. The reason why the Czerny Etudes were so widely used is that they contain almost all of the technical difficulties of piano playing and all of the possibilities on the piano, especially his Etudes Op. 299 and Etudes Op. 740.¹⁸ In his Etudes Op. 740, Czerny provided a fitting title to explain its corresponding techniques. For example, Op. 740, no.1 is titled "Action of the Fingers, Quiet Hand;" no. 3 is "Clearness in Rapidity;" and no.14, "Chord Passages." Perhaps Goldenweiser picked up the love of Czerny exercises from his teacher Siloti (a pupil of Liszt's) who had also mastered many of the Etudes since Liszt himself studied with Czerny.

The Importance of Proper Score Reading

One of the distinguishing features of the Goldenweiser school is the art of properly reading and interpreting the score. Score reading is a very important aspect of piano learning, training, and teaching. Many people think that reading scores is a very simple thing but that is not the case. Score reading is a very significant and complex job for the performers as it encompasses reading the notes, all the markings on the score, and knowing what a composer's marks indicate according to the style and period of the music. All of the information needs to be conveyed, and only by meeting such requirements can we discover the meaning of the music behind the score.

¹⁷ Kofman, "The History of the Russian Piano School," 33.

¹⁸ Michail Markov in discussion with the author, 13 April 2018.

In fact, many pianists do not develop good reading habits and audiences often hear many exciting performances that are not an accurate representation of the composer's intentions. During a piano lesson with Hong Teng, a piano professor of the Shanghai Conservatory in 1950s, Teng said that now we hear too many "fake" performances. The performer overemphasizes the external show, and does not pay attention to the inner meaning of the music. They do not carefully study the information given to us by the great composers in the score."¹⁹

According to Braginsky, the most important thing he learned from Goldenweiser is the art of proper score reading. Goldenweiser so valued detail in score reading that he would even become agitated and yell at his student over something so minor as the observance of the length of eighth-note rest versus that of a quarter-note rest. For Goldenweiser, this was the same mistake as playing an incorrect note. Braginsky also quoted a letter between Beethoven and Czerny:

I am very sorry that I was angry with you today. However, you, Karl (Czerny), as a student of mine, you should clearly know that I hope my works will be played correctly as I have marked on the score.²⁰

From these words we can see that the importance of reading scores has been valued for hundreds of years and that serious study at the instrument should begin with careful study of the composer's marking. In this way, Goldenweiser is carrying on the great traditions laid down by masters of the past and forms a link between the world of Beethoven and the present day. From his work as an editor of music, we see that Goldenweiser highly regarded the original manuscript and his suggestions are meant as a way for teachers and students to enter the – spirit of the work.

¹⁹ Author's live piano lesson with Hong Teng, January 4, 2018.

²⁰ Alexander Braginsky, in discussion with the author, April 17, 2018

Neuhaus and Goldenweiser

Goldenweiser's teaching approach was also valued by other famous professors at the Moscow Conservatory, such as his main rival Henrich Neuhaus (1888-1964). Being two musical giant teachers in the conservatory, their students often tell humorous stories about their competitive relationship. Goldenweiser once said to Neuhaus, "You are such a nasty person, I am not coming to your funeral." "But I will come to yours," Neuhaus replied.²¹

Another story tells that once Neuhaus attended one of Goldenweiser's recitals at the Great Hall of the Conservatory. At that concert and already quite advanced in age, Goldenweiser played the "Mephisto Waltz," no.1 by Franz Liszt. After the concert, Neuhaus expressed his thanks to Goldenweiser by saying: "Alex, congratulations on the recital-especially the 'Mephisto Waltz,' which was the best half hour of your program."²²

Despite his hostility towards Goldenweiser, Neuhaus, would sometimes send his students to Grigory Ginzburg (1904-1961), a former Goldenweiser pupil and professor of the Moscow Conservatory. With a bit of sarcastic admiration for Ginzburg's technical mastery, Neuhaus believed "except pianola (player piano), only Grigory Ginzburg could play all the jumps in Liszt's Don Giovanni perfectly, without any wrong notes."²³ Ginzburg's superb piano techniques were the result of Goldenweiser's teaching method. Ginzburg once said that all his piano skills come from Goldenweiser, because Goldenweiser had him play all the scales and etudes in different tonalities.²⁴ These two great piano teachers Goldenweiser and Neuhaus, perhaps are the greatest of the twentieth century and great pianists in their own right, perhaps motivated each other to reach artistic results that might have proved difficult without their healthy rivalry.

²¹ Michail Markov, in discussion with the author, April 13, 2018.

²² Michail Markov, in discussion with the author, April 13, 2018.

²³ Kofman, "The History of the Russian Piano School,"

²⁴ Alexander Braginsky, in discussion with the author, April 17, 2018.

Memories of Goldenweiser's Pupils

Students in Alexander Borisovich's class during the pre-war years have many memories of Goldenweiser. His way of talking with children, serious, without a trace of falseness, often with a faint note of humor, attracted them to him. At the same time he was very demanding, strict, and sometimes irritable. After October 1953, Goldenweiser's temper, sharpness, and sometimes roughness resulted from his desire that a pupil play well. Pupils hate indifferent teachers.²⁵ The following is an abridged fragment from the excellent memoirs of the well-known teacher and organist Leonid Isaakovich Roizman:

They often said of Goldenweiser that he "loved his students too much" and always tried to promote them. To me it sounds like the best praise a teacher can deserve... Yes, Alexander Borisovich loved his students. There was not a shadow of sentimentality in this feeling. In outward appearance his attentive attitude toward us showed itself in traits hardly noticeable to a stranger: pat on your shoulder, an ironic glance, and instantly you would feel happy! Or he would speak quite sharply and ironically of a students' features, or playing.²⁶

Goldenweiser's teaching philosophies and methods not only affected his own pupils, but continue to influence his pupil's pupil. His teaching modal provided students valuable experiences and resulted in fine traditions in piano teaching. They are not immutable in the teaching process, but based on the art of Goldenweiser's piano teaching, they are more perfect and more characteristic with a deeper understanding of the piano playing. All of these advancements are due to Goldenweiser's school of piano teaching. A good example of this lineage would be Victor Merzahnov.

²⁵ Paperno, *Dmitri Notes of a Moscow pianist*, 27.

²⁶ Paperno, *Dmitri Notes of a Moscow pianist*, 27

Victor Merzhanov inherited the excellent performance traditions of teachers and laid a solid foundation of his future success, teaching at the Moscow Conservatory and training a large number of outstanding pianists, including, Victor Bunin, Michail Markov, Oleg Volkov and Tatiana Shebanova.

Through what I have seen and heard about the piano teaching skills of Goldenweiser, I think the piano teaching of Merzhanov is very close to Goldenweiser, but there are also some differences and improvements. About Merzhanov's teaching, the most impressive and inspiring thing to me is the importance of timing in music. Time is supposed to be alive in music. For instance, you can always take breath between cadences, and go out of your metronome, while still keeping the music structure. That is what I learned one from Merzhanov, and that is also what Goldenweiser said to Feinberg.

Sound, of course, is another strong thing that I learned from Merzhanov. Goldenweiser prefers legato playing, and Merzhanov is more often used non-legato. I observed the performances of the best pianists in the world today and discovered that many of them are using non-legato methods as Merzhanov said, for example, Sokolov. Listen carefully to his performance, and you will find that Sokolov used non-legato playing most of his recordings. He uses a lot of wrist motion to make the phrase a non-legato effect. This is not the same as the assertion that Goldenweiser's emphasis on legato's ballistics is the most important and dominant. Of course, Merzhanov does not deny the importance of legato, but he believes that when the pianist plays in a large concert hall, the pianist needs to send each note clearly to the listener's ears to achieve this, the effective method is to use non-legato.²⁷

This point is not mentioned in the teaching of Goldenweiser, but his students have a new understanding and interpretation of piano performance based on his piano pedagogy.

By the way, I recently listened to a concert by Andrea Schiff in Barcelona. He played a complete set of Bach Keyboard Concertos, and I carefully observed his performance. He also uses the same non-legato playing mentioned by Merzhanov. Of course, Schiff plays Bach's piece in Baroque style, and maybe this is not the best example, but anyway, his non-legato style clearly delivers the notes to my ears, which reminded me of Merzhanov.²⁸

²⁷ Michail Markov, in discussion with the author, April 13, 2018.

²⁸ Michail Markov, in discussion with the author, April 13, 2018.

Chapter Three

Fingers in Service to Music: Goldenweiser's Edition of Beethoven Piano Sonatas

Goldenweiser made over 250 radio recordings and numerous records before his death, including works by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Grieg, Chopin, Glinka, Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Arensky, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev. He also recorded chamber music with outstanding virtuosi including Soviet violinists David Oistrakh and Leonid Kogan and cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, and many others. His revising and editing of piano pieces includes: the complete Beethoven Piano Sonatas, complete Mozart Piano Sonata, the complete Haydn Piano Sonatas, and a large number of other composers including Bach, Scarlatti, Liszt and Tchaikovsky. These are of great worth in performance as well as teaching. Analysis of three Beethoven sonatas, F Major, Op. 10, no. 2; B-flat Major, Op. 22; and D Major, Op. 28, reveals the practical, pedagogical, and performing value of Goldenweiser's editions, particularly with regards to his fingering suggestions. I am convinced that Goldenweiser's edition of the Beethoven Sonatas is of special significance and value in comparison to other editions. Goldenweiser's edition is marked with more detailed fingering, pedaling, and interpretations than most other editions. If the Henle's edition of the Beethoven Sonata is considered now to have more academic value, then Goldenweiser's edition could be said to have far greater value to the performer due to the numerous suggestions of practical value.²⁹ Unlike the Urtext edition, all of the details on the score are clearly displayed as Goldenweiser's own thought with little distinction between what is specified (in fingering and pedaling) by Beethoven. Moreover, like the great editions of Beethoven Sonatas by Hans von Bülow and Arthur Schnabel, Goldenweiser's comes with impressively detailed endnotes that explain the concepts of the

²⁹ G. Henle Publishers is a German publishing company that specializes in urtext editions of sheet music.

editor, ideas of interpretation, and pitfalls for both teachers and students. Therefore, this edition is extremely useful and possibly indispensable for learning Beethoven's work. Braginsky found his teacher's edition very helpful and preferred using it over the others available.³⁰

This chapter will focus on analyzing the practical pedagogical and performing value of Goldenweiser's Beethoven edition paying close attention to the fingering suggestions found in excerpts from three sonatas: F Major, Op. 10 No. 2, B-Flat Major, Op. 22, and D Major, Op. 28.

One can observe clearly that the fingering in the sonatas compiled by Goldenweiser were based on a lifetime of playing and teaching these works at the highest level. The starting point is creating the appropriate sounds demanded by the composer, which are both reasonable and scientifically conceived with regard to intelligibility of finger patterns and layout. Neuhaus once said that wherever the difficulties in the work are concerned, it must first start with the fingering.³¹ Schnabel's edition of the Beethoven Sonatas is similar to Goldenweiser's in many ways, since it also incorporates many detailed comments however; it is slightly thinner than Goldenweiser's edition, which is divided into four large volumes instead of two.

Sheer Quantity of Fingerings

Perhaps the most prominent feature of the Goldenweiser Edition of Beethoven Sonatas is the exhaustive fingering suggestions often with multiple fingering suggestions for the same passage. Only Schnabel's is comparable to the quantity of fingering alone. However, many of the fingerings in Schnabel's edition do not fully apply to actual performances. This will be explained in the next section. Of course, we must not deny Schnabel's enormous contributions to the

³⁰ Alexander Braginsky, in discussion with the author, April 17, 2018.

³¹ Henrich Neuhaus, *On the Art of Piano Performance* (Beijing: People's Music Publishing House, 1963),.

preparation of his edition and his own performances that did much to popularize the Beethoven's Sonatas. I'm convinced that in certain critical places, the fingerings conceived by Goldenweiser may be more suitable for contemporary performance and found universally practical to many hand types.

Only considering the first movement of Sonata in F Major, Op. 10, no. 2 as an example, the number of fingerings labeled by Goldenweiser numbers around 1,000 separate indications, when compared with the Henle edition of the same movement, Conrad Hansen only indicated fingerings 196 times.³² The great difference in quantity reveals Goldenweiser's strong intention to highlight the value of fingering solutions for the student and teacher.

An examination of the fingerings in Goldenweiser's edition reveals the two reasons for their prevalence. First, Goldenweiser labeled the fingerings of almost all notes in certain phrases. In the Henle, Hansen only annotated, the fingerings of the most important notes in a phrase, while others default to the fingerings that should be used naturally (Hansen does not mark these). This often presents a problem because there are several possibilities for unlabeled fingerings and sometimes there are several possibilities for learners to study and select, though they may be less convenient or systematic. In Goldenweiser's edition, there are few places where performers need to guess the editors' intentions through their own attempts. Instead, Goldenweiser clearly conveyed his fingering suggestions on the score. Out of the notes without specific fingerings marked, there is only one possibility. For instance, in the first movement of Beethoven Sonata Op. 10, no.2, in measure 47 to 50 (Table 1),

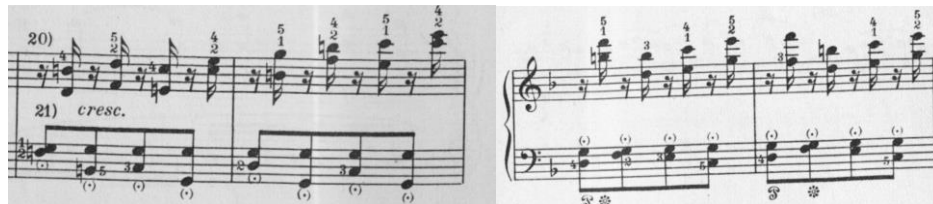
³² Conrad Hansen (1906-2002), German pianist and educator, he edited and provided the fingering for the Beethoven Sonatas of the Henle edition.

Notes Without Fingering									
Possible Fingering	3 4 5 1 1 2	3 5 1 1	3 4 1 2	5 1	4 1	5 4 1 1	3 4 1 1	4 5 1 1	5 5 4 2 1 1

Table. 1. Possible fingerings on right hand that unmarked, mm 47-50, 1st movement of Op 10, no.2³³

It is interesting to observe in this passage that Goldenweiser's fingering were organized by combining groups (1-4, 2-5, or 4-2, 5-1) for greater ease of execution and speed by avoiding the repetition on the thumb (Example 1).

Example 1 Sonata in F Major, Op. 10, no. 2, mvmt, mm. 47–50 (Goldenweiser edition)



Goldenweiser took great care to reiterate the fingerings in the recapitulation of the sonata or in the A section of a Rondo. Since recapitulations and the A sections of Rondos usually reappear in much the same way as they do at the beginning of a piece, many editors omit the fingering in those passages. In contrast, Goldenweiser very carefully reminded musicians of the fingerings despite the repetition. Example 2 and Example 3 show.³⁴

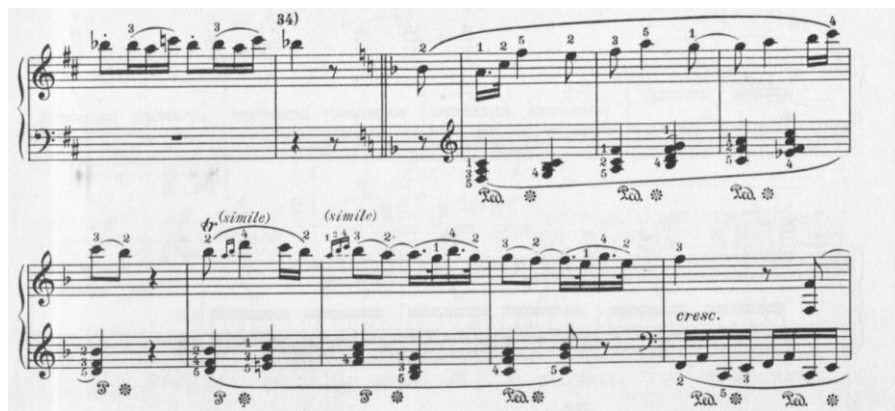
³³ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klavier Sonaten, Band. 1*, ed. cConrad Hansen (Munich: Henle Verlag, 1980.)

³⁴ Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.

Example 2 Sonata in F Major, Op. 10, no. 2, mvmt, mm. 1–13 (Goldenweiser edition)



Example 3 Sonata in F Major, Op. 10, no. 2, mvmt. , mm. 134-144 (Goldenweiser edition)



In the fourth movement of the Sonata in D Major, Op. 28, the head theme appears three times. Although the three motives are exactly the same, Goldenwesier indicated the fingerings each time. The choice of fingering is particularly noteworthy. It is obvious that Goldenwesier wanted a *crescendo* since he began the left hand phrase, after the initial thumb to establish tonality, with the second finger on A and then kept the thumb for the remainder of the

introductory pedal passage. This fingering, in essence, cleverly creates a crescendo (Example 4.

Motive 1st appearance, Op. 28, 4th movement, mm.1-4 (Goldenweiser edition), 5, and 6).³⁵

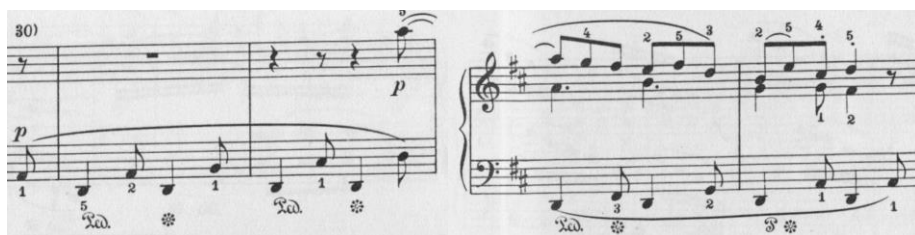
Example 4. Motive 1st appearance, Op. 28, 4th movement, mm.1-4 (Goldenweiser edition)



Example 5. Motive 2nd appearance, Op. 28, 4th movement, mm.51-55 (Goldenweiser edition)



Example 6. Motive 3rd appearance, Op. 28, 4th movement, mm.113-117 (Goldenweiser edition)



Such care and intention is almost certainly due to his lifetime experience as both a master pianist and artist-teacher to armies of aspiring pianists. In his numerous works for children,

³⁵ Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.

Goldenweiser also labeled fingerings for all the notes in every single phrase. The astounding number of fingerings is incomparable to other editors or composers, even in the pedagogical repertoire. The systematic piano educator such as Carl Czerny who composed so many didactic etudes for all levels of pianists could still not compare with Goldenweiser in the sheer number of fingerings.

The Practical Use of Fingering

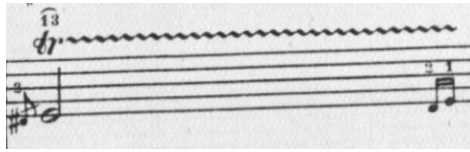
In Goldenweiser's fingering system, most of the accented or emphasized notes are executed using the stronger fingers. We usually refer to the fingers as 1, 2 and 3. In other editions of the Beethoven sonatas, the editor is more concerned with the perhaps superficial logic and antiquated fingering ideals of avoiding thumbs on black notes, rather than taking into account which fingers are the most appropriate to the general dynamics indicated by the composer or the natural contour of the phrase.

For instance, in the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op.10 no. 2, at measure 58 (Example 7), the right hand plays a *fortissimo* bass trill. Goldenweiser used the two of the strongest fingers, 1 and 3, to emphasize the strength and speed the passage requires.³⁶ In the Henle edition, Hansen only uses one strong finger 3, and on A, he inexplicably suggests finger 5.³⁷ (Example 8) This fingering is decidedly disadvantageous since most pianists avoid trilling with any of the outer fingers as much as possible.

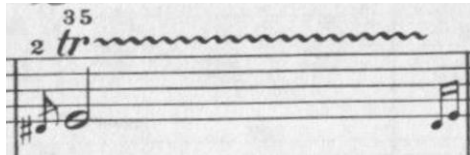
³⁶ Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.

³⁷ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten, Band.1*, ed. Conrad Hansen (Munich: Henle Verlag, 1980).

Example 7 F Major, Op. 10, no. 2, mvmt. 1, mm. 58 (Goldenweiser edition)



Example 8 F Major, Op. 10, no. 2, mvmt. 1, mm. 58 (Henle edition)



In some of the most technically difficult passages in the Beethoven Sonatas, Goldenweiser's fingerings attain even greater inspiration and greatly alleviate physical complexity while saving precious time in mastering the passage. For example, in the first movement of B-flat Major, Op. 22, Beethoven wrote an A-Major arpeggio with the added G-sharp in measure 44. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this phrase is the A and G-sharp that alternate at a fast tempo. Using fingers 4 and 5 to play the two notes is maybe the most logical at first glance. However, it quickly becomes clear that the choice to use the fingers 4 and 5 consecutively in a fast tempo is extremely inconvenient and is not usually suitable for practical application. For most players, this fingering will produce unevenness and finger fatigue since the two fingers are the weak and less powerful.

In Schnabel's edition of the same passage (see Example 9), he suggests the fingering of 5-1-2-1-2-4-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-3-2-1. In other words, he uses the strong fingers 1 and 2 on the two most difficult notes, A and G-sharp. Even though the difficulty of these two notes was solved, his use of other fingers in this phrase was not satisfactory due to excessive finger crossing. Schnabel uses finger crossings five times in this short phrase. It is well known that using too any

finger crossings is not conducive to the continuity, evenness, and speed of the musical phrase, especially in fast tempos. Schnabel's fingering, though clever, creates as many problems as it suggests solutions.

Example 9 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 44 (Schnabel edition)³⁸



In the Henle edition, Conrad Hansen uses a superficially logical fingering and successfully avoids too much finger crossing. But, he also uses the weakest two fingers (4 and 5) which is not desirable (Example 10).

Example 10 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 44 (Henle edition)



In Goldenweiser's edition, he uses the fingers 3 and 5 in this passage, which only uses one weak finger. The continuous use of the fingers 3 and 5 to play fast phrases does not affect

³⁸ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, vol. 1, ed. Artur Schnabel (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935).

the speed, and seems more reasonable than using the fingers 4 and 5. (Example 11) In addition, Goldenweiser indicated only one time finger crossing. Therefore, in all case, Goldenweiser's fingerings in this section are the most suitable for pianists.

Example 11 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 44 (Goldenweiser edition)



Similar situations also occur in other places in this movement and in other works as well. For example, in measure 91 of this movement, the highest notes are C and D-flat. The most logical fingering is with fingers 4 and 5, but again, these are the two of the weakest fingers. Schnabel suggests this. (Example 14) Instead, Goldenweiser and Hansen employ fingers 1 and 3, since finger crossings are not involved here. (Example 12 and 13)

Example 12 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 91 (Henle edition)



Example 13 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 91(Goldenweiser edition)



Example 14 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 91(Schnabel edition)



Looking back at the Schnabel edition, it is not difficult to find that in this section, Schnabel marked a *dim*, if we proceed from a dynamics point of view, the 5th and 4th fingers of Schnabel's markings are not hard to understand –he uses the two weak fingers to play the notes softer.

Fingering related to his teaching art

Goldenweiser reflected his teaching through his fingerings, particularly in the etudes as he attached a great importance to the teaching and learning of these as didactic works. Many of Goldenweiser's students mentioned this in interviews or memories. Goldenweiser often required his students to play the same etude in different keys while using the same fingerings. For example, in the first movement of the Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 22, at measure 12, the left hand has four groups of similar sixteenth notes, which can be seen at the beginning of the same

etude, played with different tonalities (Example 15).³⁹ We can find that Goldenweiser suggests the same fingering of 1-3-2-5 in these four phrases. This reveals the use of fingering in Goldenweiser's piano teaching.

Example 15 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 1, mm. 12 (Goldenweiser edition)



Similar passages occur in other movements including the third movement of the same work at measure 32 (Example 16).⁴⁰ The left hand can also be seen as the beginning of the same etude in a different key area. Similarly, Goldenweiser also edited this section to have identical fingerings. Although Goldenwieser only marked the fingers 1 and 4, we can assume that the two notes after the fingers 1 and 4 must be played with fingers 2 and 3.

Example 16 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 3, mm. 32 (Goldenweiser)



³⁹ Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.

⁴⁰ Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.

In the Schnabel edition, there are two options for the same measure (Example 17). The first is 4-1-2-3-1-2-1-2-3-2-3-1, and the second is 3-1-2-3-4-3-1-2-3-2-3-1. The same problem exists in both of cases, too much finger crossing. In the Henle edition, although Hansen does not label all the fingerings, from the position of the finger 1, he indicated the three groups of sixteenth notes should use the same fingering (Example 18).⁴¹

Example 4 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 3, mm. 32 (Schnabel edition)



Example 18 B-flat Major, Op. 22, mvmt. 3, mm. 32 (Henle edition)



In addition to the fingerings in Beethoven's sonata by Goldenweiser, his emphasized playing legato. In teaching, Goldenweiser often emphasized that legato should be real instead of using the pedal to create a legato. Many people think that the piano is an instrument that cannot produce a legato effect, but it is not. The piano can produce a legato effect.

When teaching children, it is important for them to develop a habit of playing continuously. Even when referring to the use of pedal, Goldenweiser started considering legato articulation.

⁴¹ Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, ed. Hansen.

For example, in the fourth movement of the B-flat Major Sonata, Op. 22, measures 9–11, Goldenweiser used fingers 3-5-4-3-5-3-4-5-3-5-4-5-4-5-4-3-5 to play the top notes in the sonata's octaves (Example 19).⁴² In these three measures, Goldenweiser only marked a half beat pedal, demanding that the performer play entirely finger legato on the octaves without relying on the pedal.

A musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written for piano (p) and features a treble and bass clef. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three measures. The first measure contains a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The second measure contains a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The third measure contains a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The score is written in a simple, clear style, suitable for a children's songbook.

⁴² Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.
⁴³ Beethoven, *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, ed. Goldenweiser.

Example 6 Op. 10, no. 2, mm. 21–22 (Goldenweiser edition)



Additionally, it is necessary to mention here that Goldenweiser's school pays great attention to the training of the upper voices, especially in chords and octaves, since the upper voice of most works is the melodic part of the phrase. This also creates a three-dimensionality of the sound. From the recordings of a large number of Goldenweiser's students, it is not difficult to find that almost all of them inherited this characteristic of the Goldenweiser school. Recording including Liszt's *Annees de Pelerinage* played by Lazar Berman, Grieg's *Piano Concerto in a minor* played by Nodar Gabunia, and Medtner's *Sonata Reminiscenza* played by Grigory Ginzburg reflect Goldenweiser's influence.

Goldnewieser's editions offer few possibilities for the performers to choose from. The Schnabel edition of the Beethoven Sonatas has a similar amount of fingerings but Schnabel marked the possible fingerings for the performer's reference if there are multiple options. Since the fingerings of the Henle's edition are far fewer in number than the fingerings of the Schnabel and Goldenweiser editions, it is not used here for comparison. In the fourth-movement coda of Sonata Op. 28, Schnabel provided several fingering schemes in measures 193, 194, 195, 196, 198, 201, 202, 204, and 205. At the beginning of the first movement in Op. 28, the left-hand bass D, Schnabel also indicated two fingering schemes, namely 5-5-5 and 3-3-3. In measure 183 of the same movement, he also provided two fingering possibilities. The same example also

appeared in many other Beethoven Sonatas in addition to Schnabel's edition, but they are not illustrated here. Goldenweiser's edition differs, shedding light on the personality and teaching characteristics of Goldenweiser. (Example 21)

Example 7 D Major, Op. 28, mvmt. 1, mm. 1-2(Goldenweiser edition)



Goldenweiser is recognized as a strict and demanding teacher. This is not only reflected in his teaching but also in his own playing. In his diary, Goldenweiser often mentioned that he was not happy with himself as a pianist, writing about all kinds of dissatisfaction with his performances. Perhaps this explains the strictness of the fingerings in his editions.

Conclusion

Goldenweiser's art of piano teaching influenced generations of Russian pianists. His approach has been studied and carried forward by performers all over the world. He has spent his entire life in the music business with the personal belief, "Those who have dedicated themselves to art have always been eager to move forward. Not moving forward means going backwards."⁴⁴

Unlike some of his colleagues at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory, such as Neuhaus and Feinberg, Goldenweiser did not publish a method or tutor that codified his ideas on the art of piano. However, he created a large body of rigorously detailed teaching editions that give us a clear image of his thoughts on technical and musical problems, allowing contemporary performers the opportunity to extrapolate his theories of certain pedagogical methods.

⁴⁴ Zheng, "Key Representative in the Piano Department of Tchaikovsky Conservatory," 25.

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